

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 ACDA-07 OMB-01 PRS-01 USIA-06
SSM-03 /074 W
-----071526Z 054686 /41

R 071100Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2210
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 0595

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, EG, CZ
SUBJECT: CONFUSION OVER CHNOUPEK STOPOVER AT CAIRO

REF CAIRO 3505

1. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS HERE WITH MYSELF AND DCM, EGYPTIAN
AMBASSADOR CHOUARI AND HIS POLCOUNS HAVE PROVIDED FURTHER
DETAILS REGARDING FOREIGN MINISTER CHNOUPEK'S FEBRUARY 24
STOPOVER AT CAIRO. THIS STOPOVER HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF CONTINUING
CONFUSION IN PRAGUE, PARTLY BECAUSE THE CZECHOSLOVAKS HAVE GONE
TO UNUSUAL LENGTHS TO DISCOUNT ANY KNOWLEDGE THAT IT EVER HAPPENED.
NONE OF THE LOCAL MEDIA, FOR EXAMPLE, HAS INDICATED THAT CHNOUPEK
TRAVELED ANYWHERE OTHER THAN SOMALIA AND THE PDY DURING HIS LATE
FEBRUARY JOURNEY. YET, EGYPTIANS HERE SAY HE STOPPED AT
LEAST BRIEFLY IN SANA'A, SPENT APPROXIMATELY TWO HOURS AT CAIRO
FOR MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER FAHMY, AND RETURNED HOME TO PRAGUE

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VIA MOSCOW.

2. EGYPTIAN RI COUNS SAID THERE WERE TWO PRINCIPAL ASPECTS TO THE
CHNOUPEK-FAHMY DISCUSSION: FIRST, IT INVOLVED STRAIGHTFORWARD
COMPLAINTS BY FAHMY OVER RECENT CZECHOSLOVAK MEDIA ATTACKS ON
PRESIDENT SADAT (WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT CHNOUPEK'S RESPONSE WAS BUT
PRESUME HE WOULD HAVE TRIED TO SOFT-PEDDLE THE MATTER, IN

KEEPING WITH HIS POLICY OF PROMOTING OPTIMUM GOC RELATIONS WITH THE ENTIRE NON-COMMUNIST WORLD); AND SECONDLY, IT RELATED TO CURRENT EFFORTS BY CZECHOSLOVAK AND OTHER EAST EUROPEANS TO HELP MEND FENCES BETWEEN CAIRO AND MOSCOW. RE CZECHOSLOVAK MEDIA ATTACKS, POL COUNS NOTED THAT FAHMY HAD RECENTLY ASKED CZECHOSLOVAK AMBASSADOR SULEK, WHO HAD NOT YET PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS, HOW A SATISFACTORY PRESENTATION-OF-CREDENTIALS CEREMONY COULD BE ARRANGED, WHEN PRESIDENT SADAT IS BEING VILIFIED IN THE CZECH PRESS. FAHMY THOUGHT THE QUESTION PARTICULARLY PERTINENT, SINCE SULEK IS A FORMER DIRECTOR OF CTK PRESS AGENCY. WHEN THE AMBASSADOR ASKED AMBASSADOR CHOUcri ABOUT THE LONG DELAY IN THE CZECHOSLOVAK'S PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS, CHOCRI SIMPLY INDICATED THAT SUCH DELAYS WERE NOT UNCOMMON IN CAIRO. AS FOR EFFORTS BY PRAGUE TO OFFER GOOD OFFICES IN SMOOTHING OVER EGYPTIAN-SOVIET DIFFERENCES, FAHMY REPORTERLY THREW COLD WATER ON THE NOTION BY ASSERTING THAT CZECHOSLOVAKS ARE ACTING "JUST LIKE THE RUSSIANS"--AND THUS CANNOT BE CONSIDERED A NEUTRAL PARTY.

3. JUST RECEIVED MARCH 7 EDITION OF PARTY DAILY RUDE PRAVO REPORTS THAT SULEK FINALLY PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS TO PRESIDENT SADAT ON MARCH 5. FRENCH AMBASSADOR D'HARCOURT HAS TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT HE UNDERSTOOD SETTLING THIS MATTER WAS ONE OF CHNOUPEK'S PRIME OBJECTIVES DURING HIS CAIRO STOPOVER. THUS, CHNOUPEK CAN AT LEAST TAKE SATISFACTION FROM THIS DEVELOPMENT.

4. WE ARE INTRIGUED BY REPORTS THAT CHNOUPEK RETURNED HOME VIA MOSCOW AND WONDER WHETHER HE MIGHT HAVE ALSO MET BRIEFLY WITH SOVIET OFFICIALS, PERHAPS AT THE AIRPORT, WHILE THERE. ASIDE FROM REPORTING TO THE SOVIETS ON HIS JUST-CONCLUDED VISITS--ESPECIALLY CONFIDENTIAL

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THE SESSION WITH FAHMY--HE WOULD HAVE A GREAT DEAL TO TALK ABOUT WITH REGARD TO HIS CURRENT FOREIGN POLICY DAMAGE-LIMITING EFFORTS IN THE ONGOING STRUGGLE HERE OVER HUMAN RIGHTS.

BYRNE

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